

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 14 had been rejected based upon the prior art. Claims 2-13 and 15-20 have been indicated as being allowable, subject to being rewritten in independent form and overcoming the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112. In response, Claims 3 and 16 have been canceled and subject matter thereof has been incorporated in Claims 1 and 14, respectively. Additionally, Claims 2 and 15 have been rewritten in independent form. The prior art rejection is therefore believed to be moot.

Concerning the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, the Examiner has objected that the claims fail to describe the invention's location within the vehicle. In response, Claims 1, 2, 4-7, 14, 15, and 17-20 have been amended to recite a transfer ratio varying apparatus for a vehicle, rather than a vehicle. Beyond this, Applicants respectfully note that the claims are clearly enabled under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph since steering mechanisms are well known in the art and so those skilled in the art would readily understand the location of a mechanism including a steering shaft. The Examiner's attention is also directed to that fact that the applied U.S. patent 6,378,647 (Birsching) claims a steering assist mechanism for a motor vehicle but does not disclose, illustrate, or claim the location of the mechanism within the vehicle. This provides further evidence that the level of disclosure required for enablement of a mechanism comprising a steering shaft does not require description or illustration of the location of the mechanism within a vehicle.

Concerning the Examiner's objection that the terms "damper" and "elastic member" are unclear, the Examiner's attention is respectfully directed to the fact that these are separate elements. For example, as illustrated in the non-limiting embodiment of Figure 1, a damper 25 may be made of metal (paragraph [0026]) and need not be made of an elastic material.

The damper in this embodiment is positioned at the flexible coupling which includes not only the damper but also the fastening devices 21 and coupling main body 22.

Concerning the integral rotation of the input shaft and housing, the Examiner's attention is respectfully directed to the sentence bridging pages 5 and 6 in the specification, which describes that the input shaft 14 is "operatively connected to the housing for integral rotation."

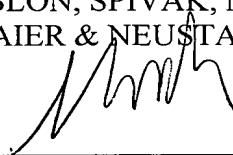
Concerning the lack of antecedent basis for "input shaft" in Claims 3 and 16, Claims 1 and 14, as amended to incorporate the subject matter of Claims 3 and 16, now recite that the flexible coupling, or means for flexibly coupling, is connected to an "input part" of the actuator or means for actuating.

Concerning the objection to the drawings, since the claims now recite a transfer ratio varying apparatus rather than a vehicle, the requirement for amending the drawings to illustrate the claimed vehicle is believed to be moot.

Applicants therefore believe that the present application is in a condition for allowance and respectfully solicit an early notice of allowability.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



Gregory J. Maier
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 25,599

Customer Number
22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413-2220
(OSMMN 06/04)
RTP:aif

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Robert T. Pous
Registration No. 29,099